



In early phases of development a full perimeter block may not be possible



Phasing building close to the street with parking to the rear enables future intensification to take place

The intensity pyramid

On large schemes, it often proves useful to articulate different housing forms in particular around a ‘density pyramid’. This requires the positioning of lower density forms at the edges of the project and the higher density forms around and in the local centre, with a gradation of types and sizes in between. Within this general approach, smaller ‘hot spots’ of intensity can be created, for example a higher apartment block on a corner or at a gateway.

3.3.3 DENSITY AND INTERIOR SPACE

Enable people to trade space for place

There is no reason why high densities cannot also mean lots of living space, as the highly valued mansion blocks of Kensington, grand apartments of Paris or lofts of Manhattan all prove. The approach should ensure that high-density proposals use adequate floorplate standards and thus avoid cramped living conditions.

3.3.4 DENSITY AND TIME

Take a long term view

Overall urban form aspirations are not always possible immediately. However, thoughtful positioning of buildings will enable early developments to set the context for the future and provide the framework to enable further intensification as the project builds out.

This requires that buildings be positioned close to the street, with parking in interior courts - establishing a positive relationship between public and private realms. Although there may be insufficient buildings to generate a perimeter block immediately (see 3.7.1), if considered from the outset this approach can enable the level of development to increase as the project matures.



Homes provide good surveillance of internal courtyard



Wide decks promote use as a social space

Homes for Change, Hulme, Manchester:	
<i>A striking new form borne of community involvement</i>	
Location	The Hulme area of central Manchester, previously a notorious inner city 1960s system built housing estate.
Designers	Mills Beaumont Leavey Channon Architects (Phase I) Harris Ince Architects (Phase II)
Developer	Guinness Trust and Homes for Change Co-op
Local Authority	Manchester City Council
Site Area	0.63 hectares
Density	79 units per hectare
Project	A mixed use perimeter block of 50 flats and maisonettes, of which there are 28 different types, over 1500m ² of multi-functional spaces including a theatre, shop units, workshop, studios, darkroom and recording studio.
Details	The award winning Phase I scheme takes on board all that was good about the 1960s ‘crescent blocks’ identified by the former residents of ‘the Crescents’, who came to found a housing co-operative to oversee its development. The dramatic architecture resulting from a process of the local community driving the scheme forward is a striking rebuttal to assertions that public participation in the design process generates blandness. The forms are highly unconventional, high density and mixed-use, with environmental performance given high priority. Perhaps most surprising of all is the retention of the deck access concept that characterised the block’s 1960s predecessor, though their modern counterparts are wider and visually more permeable. These were requested by the residents for their tendency to promote positive social interaction, and together with the terraces, help provide overlooking to an internal courtyard used for informal social gatherings and safe children’s play.
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